For women are shrews, both short and tall:
'Tis merry in hall, when beards wag all[6],
And welcome merry shrove-tide[7].
Be merry, be merry, &c.

FAL. I did not think master Silence had been a man of this mettle.

SIL. Who I ? I have been merry twice and once ere now.

" My wife *has* all" is an equally good introduction to what follows. It is a proof that she is a shrew. BOSWELL.

[6] *'Tis merry in hall, when beards wag all,"]* Mr. Warton, in his History of English Poetry, observes, that this rhyme is found in a poem by Adam Davie, called The Life of Alexander:
" Merry swithe it is in halle,
" When *the berdes waveth alle*' STEEVENS.

This song is mentioned by a contemporary author: " — which done, grace said, and the table taken up, the plate presently conveyed into the pantrie, the hall summons this consort of companions (upon payne to dyne with duke Humphfrie, or to kisse the hare's foot) to appear at the first call: where a song is to be sung, the under song or holding whereof is* *It is merrie in haul where beards wag all.' The Serving-man's Comfort,* 1598, sig. C.

Again: " It is a common proverbe *It is merry in hall, when beardes wag all*^ *Briefe Conceipte of English Policie,>* by William Stafford, 1581. Reprinted 1751, as a work of Shakspeare's.

REED.

7 And welcome merry SHROVE-TIDE.] *Shrove-tide* was formerly a season of extraordinary sport and feasting. In the Romish church there was anciently a feast immediately preceding Lent, which lasted many days, called Carniscapium. See Carpentier in v. Supp. Lat. Gloss. Du Cange, torn. i. p. 381. In some cities of France, an officer was annually chosen, called Le Prince D'Amoreux, who presided over the sports of the youth for six days before Ash-Wednesday. Ibid. v. Araoratus, p. 195; and v. Cardinalis, p. 818. Also, v. Spinetum, torn. iii. 848. Some traces of these festivities still remain in our universities.
In The Percy Household-book, 1512. it appears, «'that the clergy and officers of Lord Percy's chapel performed a play before his lordship upon Shrowftewesday at night." P. 345.

T. WARTON.

See also Dodsley's Collection of Old Plays, vol. xii. p. 403, last edition, REED.